(i) To take up conversion of lines to develop alternative broad gauge (BG) routes obviating the need for doubling existing BG lines on these routes.

(ii) To establish new BG links between stations connected by other BG lines.

(iii) To establish BG connection to ports, industrial centres and locations having potential for growth.

(iv) To take up conversion of lines required on strategic considerations.

(v) To minimize transshipment and to improve wagon turn around by avoiding delays at transshipment points.

Many new line and gauge conversion projects have been taken up on socio-economic consideration for development of backward, hilly, remote and under developed areas.

(d) to (g) Gauge conversion of Ajmer-Phulera-Ringus-Rewari and Bhildi-Samdari have been taken up under National Rail Vikas Yojana. On Ajmer-Phulera-Ringus-Rewari (295 kms.) section, 210 kms from Phulera-Rewari via Ringus is targeted for completion during 2007-08 and Bhildi-Samdari and Ajmer-Phulera during 2008-09. gauge conversion of Jaipur-Phulera 2nd line is not a part of this scheme. However, it is sanctioned as a doubling project and targeted for completion during 2008-09.

Technical co-operation from french Railways to set up high-speed corridors

1682. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Railways sought any technical cooperation from French National Railways to set up high-speed passenger corridors in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any discussion on this have been held with the officials concerned during the recent visit of French President to India;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any other cooperation has been sought from France; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) During the fifth Indo-French Steering Committee meeting held on 15.01.2008 in New Delhi with SNCF International, France (a French National Railway Company), French side shared their experience of high speed trains in France with the Indian side. Both sides endeavoured to have a concerted approach regarding any seminars to be held by French Railways on the subject in India.

(e) and (f) Under the ambit of an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with French Railways, sessions on cooperation on the areas of electric traction system, electric locomotive technology, fire simulation software and training have taken place.